

Applic. No. 10/782,324

Response Dated September 12, 2005

Responsive to Office Action of July 13, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A locking configuration,
comprising:

an adjustable steering column;

a fixed mounting;

a tilt-adjustable casing tube secured on said fixed mounting,
said tilt-adjustable casing tube surrounding said adjustable
steering column;

a locking device provided between said fixed mounting and said
tilt-adjustable casing tube, said locking device having an
actuating lever pivotable between a locking position and a
release position such that said actuating lever pivots
laterally next to or below said tilt-adjustable casing tube
and such that the release position is below the locking
position;

said locking device having a handle component for said
actuating lever, said handle component being disposed at a

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given distance from said tilt-adjustable casing tube when said actuating lever is in the locking position; and

said actuating lever having an angled region formed with a predetermined buckling point and being configured as a

~~deformation element for absorbing energy wherein said~~

actuating lever is plastically deformable in a crash such that said handle component moves toward said tilt-adjustable casing tube.

Claim 2 (canceled)

Claim 3 (previously presented): The locking configuration according to claim 1, wherein said angled region is a hook-shaped bent region adjacent said handle component.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The locking configuration according to claim 1, wherein:

said actuating lever has a cross-sectional profile selected from the group consisting of a rectangular profile and a T-shaped profile; and

said angled region having a reduction in cross section for forming a predetermined buckling point.

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Claim 5 (original): The locking configuration according to
claim 1, wherein:

said actuating lever is formed of metal; and

~~said handle component has a metal core with a plastic coating~~
and is screwed to said actuating lever.

Claim 6 (original): The locking configuration according to
claim 1, wherein:

said actuating lever is formed of steel;

said handle component has a metal core with a plastic coating;
and

said actuating lever and said handle component are connected
to one another as a two-part element.

Claim 7 (original): The locking configuration according to
claim 1, including:

a steering-column cladding surrounding said locking device and
said tilt-adjustable casing tube;

said steering-column cladding having a receiving trough formed
therein for accommodating said handle component; and

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said receiving trough extending in a direction toward said tilt-adjustable casing tube and having a recess formed therein for providing a pass-through for said actuating lever.

Claim 8 (original): ~~The locking configuration according to~~ claim 7, wherein said steering-column cladding is configured as a deformation element for absorbing impact energy.

Claim 9 (original): The locking configuration according to claim 7, wherein:

said handle component has a side facing away from said steering column; and

said side of said handle component facing away from said steering column is disposed substantially flush with said steering-column cladding when said actuating lever is in the locking position.

Claim 10 (original): The locking configuration according to claim 7, including deformation elements provided between said tilt-adjustable casing tube and said steering-column cladding.

Claim 11 (currently amended): In combination with a vehicle having an adjustable steering column, a fixed mounting and a tilt-adjustable casing tube secured on the fixed mounting and

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surrounding the adjustable steering column, a locking device,
comprising:

an actuating lever pivotable between a locking position and a
release position such that said actuating lever pivots

~~laterally next to or below the tilt-adjustable casing tube and~~
such that the release position is below the locking position;

a handle component connected to said actuating lever, said
handle component being disposed at a given distance from the
tilt-adjustable casing tube when said actuating lever is in
the locking position; and

said actuating lever having an angled region formed with a
predetermined buckling point and being configured as a
deformation element for absorbing energy wherein said
actuating lever is plastically deformable in a crash such that
said handle component moves toward the tilt-adjustable casing
tube.

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